

REMARKS

Claims 33 and 37–40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Japanese Patent Publication 09022625 (hereinafter “Ueda”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,437,829 to Baker and U.S. Patent No. 5,830,592 to Akagi. For the following reasons, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Regarding claims 33, neither Ueda, Baker nor Akagi nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests a jacket assembly comprising a leader and that “the leader comprises *a material that narrows as the leader is elongated* by a pulling force,” as required. Likewise, regarding claim 37, none of the references teach or suggest that “the felt leader narrows and pulls away from the inner surface of the outer wall when a pulling force is applied to the second end of the felt leader in the longitudinal direction,” as required. The Examiner acknowledges that Ueda does not teach these limitations. Therefore, the Examiner relies upon the teachings of Baker and Akagi for teaching these limitations. For the following reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Baker nor Akagi teaches or suggests these limitations.

Baker effectively teaches away from providing a leader material that narrows as it is elongated. Specifically, Baker teaches *preventing* stretching or elongation by twisting the fuse element (60) about an *inextensible* linear member (63). As explained by Baker, if the fuse element (60) is made of a soft conductive material, such as lead, stretching is minimized or even eliminated. See column 4, lines 47–55. The inelastic linear member (63) can be a non-conducting string or cord (see column 2, lines 36–40). Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art upon viewing the teachings of Baker would not find any motivation to modify the teachings of Ueda to include an elongating and narrowing leader, as required by claim 33. Rather, Baker teaches reinforcing a stretchable material with a non-stretchable one to prevent stretching.

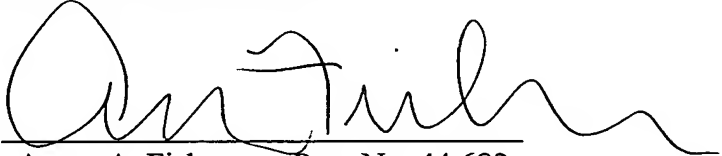
Akagi does not teach a leader that narrows as it elongates, as in claim 33. There is no teaching that the nickle felt material used to connect fuel cells narrows as it elongates or even that it elongates in response to a pulling force. In general, nickel is a rigid metal that resists stretching. It clearly would not meet that limitations of the leader in claim 33 and 37.

Therefore, even if the teachings of Ueda, Baker and Akagi were combined, every limitation of claims 33 and 37 would not be taught or suggested. Therefore, claims 33 and 37 and claims 38-40, which depend from claim 37, are patentable over the prior art of record.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 33552.

Respectfully submitted,

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

By: 
Aaron A. Fishman - Reg. No. 44,682

1801 East 9th Street
Suite 1200
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3108
(216) 579-1700

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